

What are Grants?

A grant is an amount of money that is usually provided by the government or a non-profit organisation, which are given to fund a variety of projects and ideas.

Grants can enable our affiliates to engage in new projects such as renovations, facility and equipment upgrades and hosting events without relying on traditional fundraising methods to achieve these outcomes.

Receiving a grant can be highly beneficial as it often brings welcomed publicity and support from other donors or sources of revenue including sponsorship. This 9 step by step guide will provide you with the basic information you will need to submit your grant application.

At Netball Victoria we are “here if you need”. We want to improve your project outcomes with:

- Training and development
- Facilities Development Support and Advocacy
- Letters of Support

[Click here...](#)

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Getting Started

Do you currently have a grants officer on your committee?

It is important to have a person on your committee who can manage the grants process and regularly reports to the committee. This person is aware of all funding opportunities and applications that have been made.



The grants officer should;

- Contact their local council community development officer or sport and recreational officer and ask for help and guidance in seeking grants.
- Be the person who receives the Easy Grants newsletter and any other communication from funding agencies, local councils and government departments.
- Receives correspondence from the state and national sporting bodies regarding grants and funding for Netball.



STEP 1 - BE STRATEGIC

It is critical that you incorporate grants into your Strategic Plan and as a discussion item in your monthly committee agenda.

By doing this;

- The committee is always ready to take advantage of funding opportunities as they become available
- Strategic goals can be achieved ahead of time as grant opportunities open up
- Ensures grants funding becomes a topic in your netball organisations overall financial and strategic planning
- Grant Officers are given support and guidance when required.

Tip: Consider creating a sub-committee of interested members, who are good grant writers, local advocates and planners. Consider holding a brainstorming session to identify the main grants that you should be applying for and work them into your planning calendar for the next year.

Step 2 - RESEARCH & NETWORKING

- Subscribe to [EasyGrants](#).
- Speak to your Netball Victoria [Participation Officer](#) who can provide assistance with any questions you may have.
- Check the [Netball Victoria Grants](#) page.
- Engage with other netball clubs, sporting clubs and peak bodies and look at what programs they have identified to apply for funding.
- Talk to your local government community grants or community development officer and ask them for relevant grants funding programs they are aware of.
- Look out for training and development opportunities that are run through NV, [Club Spot](#), Council or your networks (most of these will be free of charge).

STEP 3 - ELIGIBLE & MEET THE CRITERIA?

Ensure that your application meets the set criteria for your chosen grant. This is the one of the most vital steps in the grants application process.

Remember:

- Only focus on 4-5 grant applications at a time
- Some grants only allow you to have one grant funded source per project – choose wisely

Click [here](#) to access the grant seeking eligibility checklist.

STEP 4 - MET TIMELINES TO MEET DEADLINES

It is extremely important to check the application closing date when submitting a grant because there is no point in tailoring a faultless application if you have missed the cut-off date.

Use the checklist to write down the important due dates. Click [here](#) to access the checklist.

STEP 5 - CREATE A WINNING PROCESS

Whilst the information may change, there is often some consistency with the type of information that is needed for each grant application. It is important to keep in mind that an application to a local council will be different for a grant at a philanthropic foundation, because they both have different priorities. Nonetheless, each one wants to see exactly how your club intends to meet those priorities.

A standard grants funding template will help to provide the foundation of any new funding application. Including;

Who you are- This needs to be a short, precise summary of your organisation, its reach into the community and a brief explanation of your mission.

Your goals and objectives- This is where you will expand on your mission and what you offer to the community. Goals and objectives help to focus the club's energies and also gives a direction to work towards. If you have a formalised strategic plan that has been endorsed by your committee, this is where it can be used as supporting evidence. It shows a solid plan to reach goals and where there has already been success. It shows the affiliate's capacity to achieve the outcomes set out in the application.

Where you operate- Expand on your organisation's history, accomplishments, supporter base and commitment to the community.

Your future- Reiterate your values and show what your netball organisation can achieve with the assistance of the grant maker.

Your relationship with others- Expand on your relationships with the community and the fact that any grant funding has wider benefits than the direct benefit to your club.

How you operate- This is where you demonstrate that your club has the personnel, capacity, management, and commitment to be able to fulfil the project. E.g. A committee list (name, position, contact, experience).

Your achievements- Expand on your impact within the community, demonstrating both your professionalism as a sporting organisation but also your community credentials. E.g. Sporting achievements, council or government awards or community honours and accreditations or certificates the club has earned.

Create a folder with the following documents;

- ABN
- Achievements
- Annual reports & budgets
- Constitution
- Details of Club management & CVs
- Incorporation details
- Previous projects
- Public liability insurance coverage
- Strategic Plan

STEP 6 - INCREASE YOUR CHANCES OF SUCCESS

Tip 1: Read the guidelines

- Meet the Criteria (see step 3.)
- Answer every question, even if only to say "Not applicable". Answer in the required format.
- Follow directions on the format of the application, including directions about page limitation, font size and number of copies required.
- Include all attachments and information requested.

Remember: Some funding agencies will notify applicants if they are missing information, however some grant-makers who receive high application rates will immediately cull applications who have not followed the guidelines.

Tip 2: Research the agency you are applying to
It is important to know about the funding agency because the more you know about them, the more you know about what they are looking for.

- Look through their website and note their mission or vision statement
- Find out what are their stated priorities for the coming year/funding round
- Read through annual reports and note any examples of projects funded in previous years
- Understand the language and phrasing they use (then try and mirror it in your application)
- Contact someone from a club who has successfully received funding and ask their advice

Tip 3: Phone the grant-maker prior to submitting your application

- Call the grant-maker or funding program coordinator and ask whether your project would be likely to be considered. Before you make initial contact, create a list of the information or questions you want to ask.
- Contact them once again when the application has been lodged- it's best to do this so that you're at the forefront of the grant-maker's mind. Not only does this show that you are interested, but can also be a way of you double checking that they have received your application.

Tip 4: Establish exactly what the funding agency is trying to achieve

There will be a mission or purpose behind the program that is stated in the guidelines. You need to know what their priorities are, what their agenda is, and what it is they are trying to achieve by funding projects.

Tip 5: Tailoring your application – it is all about them

As previously discussed, it is important that each application is tailored to the funding agency it goes to. Whilst the general information that is required may remain the same, you still need to do the following;

- Align your language to match theirs
- Ensure you are targeting the same audience as they are
- Align your outcomes to the outcomes and wider community benefit they are seeking
- Tailor each application to the specific needs of each individual grant-maker
- Answer all the questions they want answered in the style they have requested
- Include all the extras supporting material they request

Tip 6: Collaboration and cooperation

Grant-makers now want to see a greater level of wider community benefit. Consider how your project is benefiting the broader community, for example;

- Local schools or youth club to increase participation
- Local environmental group or reserve committee to plant trees around the grounds of the club
- Local council to expand facilities
- Local welfare agency to promote the anti-drug message

Remember: When considering other stakeholders, do they add value to or reduce the value of the application. Consider how other groups may benefit from this project, whether they bring in their own expertise, time and resources to improve the project and whether they fit into the target audience of the grant-maker

Tip 7. Put it in writing

It is extremely important in a collaboration that everyone is clear from the beginning as to who will be doing what, when and how and who will be paying for it. Before you put any application in, make sure both groups are in agreement of:

- Who is supervising the project?

- Who is responsible for each element of the project?
- When each element of the project will be completed?
- Who will supply the time, resources, money to complete each element?
- How the project funding will be split between the two groups?
- When you will meet to discuss progress and issues?
- How you will settle disputes should any arise?

It is best to have a legal document drawn up if you are collaborating on a major project, however if it is small project is still important to have a written agreement outlining the details on the project.

Step 7. Structuring your application

Some grant application guidelines require applicants to fill out their own highly structured forms whilst others recommend a few headings to use which will form their proposals.

No matter how the application is structured the grant-maker must be convinced of two things;

1. The application must prove that a significant need exists
2. The application has the capacity to meet the need in a creative, appropriate and financially responsible manner

The way you structure your funding application is important. The substance of your application should be to clearly answer those questions, ensuring they know exactly what you are offering and how affiliates can help them accomplish their goals.

Most grant applications seek submissions that include (some, if not all) of the following;

An executive summary or covering letter -

Cover or Covering letter

- This is great when the application itself has to be put in on a form that breaks your project description up into a lot of different sections that do not give you a chance to make a coherent argument
- Use a couple of paragraphs giving a hard and fast sell

Note: Some grant-makers do not include it in the material that is given to assessors, so if anything is really important, please ensure it is included in the body of the application.

The Executive Summary

The Executive Summary is arguably the most important part of the proposal. It needs to be clear, concise and engaging so that the grant-maker wants to read your proposal further. You also need to align your vision with their objectives.

It should include the following;

- An introductory paragraph, giving an outline of the project, its intended audience and the requested funding amount
- Your organisation's mission and how it will be enhanced by the proposed project
- The statement of need, summarizing why you are asking for assistance from this particular grant-maker
- A demonstration of how the project aligns with both the mission of the funding body and your overall goals
- 1-2 key statistics to highlight the extent of the problem and the need for the funding, whilst providing evidence that your organisation has collected data and research in the development of this proposal
- Specific details on how the requested grant money will assist in developing a solution to filling the identified gap, and describing the ways particular groups of people will benefit
- An assessment of the total cost of the project, the amount requested from the grant-maker, and other funding sought and committed, including that provided by your own organisation (which may be in-kind)

Note: Some online application forms will require an executive summary that is less than 200 words long, so ensure you keep it brief.

Use the executive summary checklist [here](#) to ensure you have completed all of the required points

An introduction for your organisation

This section is about establishing your credibility and qualifications for funding. Please include;

- A brief overview of your organisation including its purposes, future goals and achievements.
- Demonstrate that your affiliate has the confidence and capacity to successfully deliver. You will do this by writing short descriptions of qualifications and experience of your key netball volunteers in the area for which program funds are being sought and other general project management competencies.

Tip: If you have previously created a template, you should have most of this information on hand.

Identifying the challenge or problem (Statement of need)

The purpose of this section is to build the justification for your proposal and why it is deserving of funding. You must convince the funding agency that there is a significant but not an impossible gap to be filled. The problem or need must be addressed and should be realistically achievable by your club and not overblown.

The statement of need might be:

1. Explaining the member and extent of injuries that have occurred because of concerns over your poor facilities and damaged netball courts.
2. Pointing out the unmet demand for positions in your junior netball teams ("There are 25 young people who might be lost to sport if you cannot expand your junior netball program")

Remember to:

- Use simple case studies where possible
- Use accurate statistical data to scope the dimensions of the challenge
- Do not assume the reader is familiar with the problem you are presenting.

Tip: Remember to create a concise yet powerful argument for funding whilst using persuasive writing and debating techniques.

Outlining the Solution

This section will demonstrate that you have created a clearly defined, creative, attainable and measurable strategy to address the issue you have previously stated.

Your proposal needs to:

- Make a clear and consistent argument for the project
- Give reasons why you think your approach will be successful
- Outline the specific project objectives that you hope to achieve. They should be realistic, achievable, and measurable
- Provide the benefits that will occur from your project to not only the recipients but the grant-maker as well.

*Tip: **DO NOT** simply say we will put up lighting around the court/s. **DO** explain how erecting the lighting around the netball court/s will impact on the local community and why it will be an asset to the wider community, as well as your organisation.*

Methods

Each of your stated objectives needs to be matched with a set of clear strategies or actions. These should flow naturally from your objectives and tell the reader how you are going to achieve them, by whom, and by when.

- Begin with an explanation of why this approach was adapted by your organisation and for your netball community
- Clearly present the projects methods and remember to show why these methods were supported and alternatives were denied
- Include a timeline detailing the scheduled activities for each of objective

Support

Ideally, you should be able to demonstrate constructive partnerships with all other groups with interests in the area. A proposal co-signed by two or more organisations will enhance your capacity to deliver, and will prove to potential funders that you're aware of what other clubs or groups are doing

Remember;

- The partnership should be formalized and documented.
- All collaborative work must be included in the proposal and should combine all the agreed responsibilities and timelines for each partner.

Tip: Remember not to enter into a partnership if it isn't a good fit for your netball organisation. Ultimately, you do not want a partnership that can distract you from your main objectives.

Consultation

If you are claiming that your activities benefit the community, then you need to get the community to support your proposal by explaining why it will provide a wider community benefit. You should seek support from other groups, residents, partners, local council and community leaders.

Tip: Whilst evidence of community support is not normally a requirement, having it ensures the funding agency recognises that the wider community is aware and supports your proposal. Remember to reach out to Netball Victoria for Letters of Support.

Budget

Match the budget to the activities: Be realistic. Don't try to boost the budget so you can pay for other activities. Under-costed budgets can also be detrimental as it could mean that you will run out of funds and unable to finish the project.

Create the framework. List all items of expenditure separately under clear, logical headings such as building supplies, salaries and wages, administration, publicity, permits etc.

Consider a percentage of overheads. Work out what percentage (if any) of your regular running costs (telephone, petrol, postage etc) will need to be spent or even increased for this project.

Make sure your budgets add up. When you have finished your costings, go back over them and see that all the line items have been added up and that the final figure is correct.

Check all the figures in the document. Go through wherever a figure is mentioned in your proposal and make sure they are consistent.

Match your timelines to the budget: Go through the timeline of activities in your strategy. Get quotations from suppliers for necessary major items to make sure that each of these activities is properly costed and listed.

Consider if a Contingency Fund is necessary. A contingency category is now commonly accepted by grant-makers for larger budgets. This should be no more than 5% of the total project budget and should detail the sorts of things you anticipate it might need to cover.

Factor in what your contribution is (In-kind support and volunteer hours). You need to include the amount of resources your organisation is committing to the project. It is critical that you show how your own organisation is supporting the project through either volunteer hours and in-kind donations of goods and services. In-kind services supporting infrastructure projects may need to provide additional information relating to qualifications and technical expertise related to their skills depending on the type of work being donated. Speak to Council or the funding bodies if unsure.

Account for other proposals. Any additional resources committed by other organisations or groups also need to be listed. These include other funders, sponsorship, large donations etc.

Include Budget notes (where necessary). Budget notes may sometimes be required to explain unusual items of expenditure. These can be displayed like numbered footnotes at the end of the budget.

Tip – Remember to budget fairly and honestly

Evaluation

You should have some method of documenting that you have done what you said you would do and also some method of measuring the benefit or change, even if it is a simple measure of usage or attendance. Even if the grant-maker doesn't require you to evaluate the benefits, doing it can:

- Increase your own accountability
- Strengthen claims for future funding
- Provide figures for a media story highlighting your project

Layout

It is vital that you follow the guidelines that are requested of the grant-maker. Remember, if you are asked to provide information in a particular format or length, then ensure you keep to those restrictions. If a page limit is specified, keep to it.

- Ensure your proposal looks professional (e.g. laser printed, consistent font/type size/headings, number the pages)

Make sure it is easy to read by using plenty of white rather than a block of text. This can be done by breaking up the layout with bullets, italics, headings, subheadings, charts etc.

Future Sustainability

It is important in this section for each of our netball affiliates to know exactly what they are getting into and evaluating if they will be able to afford to keep the project going (in some capacity) once the funding has ceased. This helps demonstrate that you have considered the issue of sustainability.

Language

- Your language should be specific, accurate, concise, clear and positive
- Write mainly in short simple declarative subject-verb-object sentences
- Write in the first person
- Check and recheck for typographical errors, misspellings and poor grammar. The more people that check over it the better.

STEP 8 - CHECK YOUR APPLICATION

Please look over the action checklist [here](#) before you submit your application.

STEP 9 - AFTER THE FUNDING DECISION

a. If you are successful

You will need to create a project management timeline to get your project started. This will include all the regular reporting dates that the grant-maker requires.

You should do the following;

- Have your president/chairman send a formal thank-you note to the CEO/Minister/Program Leader of the funding organisation
- Invite them to all of your special events/functions
- Send regular reports of the project to the funders with real examples of how it has made a difference. If you have delays or challenges, let them know at the time. Do not wait until after the date you should have had it finished to let people know
- Acknowledge the support of the grantmaking body on all project print and electronic publicity and on other appropriate materials
- Invite them to speak at the launch of the project
- Keep up the communication channels through emails, newsletters and annual reports

b. If you are unsuccessful

Firstly, do not take it to heart and do not give up, after all practice makes perfect. It is important to ask for feedback on your application. Every application you submit is a chance to learn and improve your ability in sourcing grant funding.

Best questions to ask;

- Should you have included more information?
- What other things could you have done?
- Would they be interested in considering your application at a further date?

Things to keep in mind

Ask your members if their employers have any schemes to support local groups. Some businesses have funding or volunteer funding that support organisations that their staff or families are involved with. For example, Telstra & Westpac offer this to their employees.

CONTACT US

- Participation Team [here](#)
- Facilities Team [here](#)
- Affiliates Services Team [here](#)

RESOURCES

- [EasyGrants](#)
- Netball Victoria's current funding opportunities [here](#)
- [Grantseeking Eligibility Checklist](#)
- [Timeline Planner](#)
- [Executive Summary Checklist](#)
- [Action Checklist](#)